

INDIA'S NATIONAL ANTHEM

PRABODHCHANDRA SEN

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# INDIA'S NATIONAL ANTHEM

It is a song of the glory and victory of India. We stand today on this platform for the glory and victory of India.

Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das

... a song which has found a place in our national life. How often is the inspiring refrain heard from thousands of voices! It is not only a song but is also like a devotional hymn.

Mahatma Gandhi

It was a great happiness to me when after the coming of Independence, we adopted *Janaganamana* as our National Anthem. I have a feeling of satisfaction that I was partly responsible for this choice, not only because it is a great national song, but also because it is a constant reminder to all of our people of Rabindranath Tagore.

Jawaharlal Nehru

# India's National Anthem

Prabodhchandra Sen



VISVA-BHARATI  
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1949

P. C. S.

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1972

P. C. S.

# India's National Anthem



# JANA-GAṆA-MANA-ADHINĀYAKA

## I

Jana-gaṇa-mana-adhināyaka, jaya hē Bhārata-bhāgya-vidhātā.  
Panjāba-Sindhu-Gujarāṭa-Marāṭhā-Drāviḍa-Utkala-Vaṅga  
Vindhya-Himāchala-Yamunā-Gaṅgā uchchhala-jaladhi-taraṅga  
Tava śubha nāmē jāgē, tava śubha āśisa māgē,  
gāhē tava jaya-gāthā.  
Jana-gaṇa-maṅgala-dāyaka, jaya hē Bhārata-bhāgya-vidhātā.  
Jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya jaya jaya, jaya hē.

## II

Aharaha tava āhvāna prachārīta, śuni tava udāra vāṇī  
Hindu-Bauddha-Śikha-Jaina-Pārasika-Musalmāna-Khrīṣṭānī  
Pūrava-paśchima āsē tava śiṃhāsana-pāśē,  
prēma-hāra haya gānthā.  
Jana-gaṇa-aikya-vidhāyaka, jaya hē Bhārata-bhāgya-vidhātā.  
Jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya jaya jaya, jaya hē.

## III

Patana-abhyudaya-bandhura panthā, yuga-yuga-dhāvita yātrī,  
Hē chira-sārathi, tava ratha-chakrē mukharita patha dina-rātrī.  
Dāruṇa-viplava-mājhē tava śaṅkhadhvani bājē  
saṅkata-duḥkhatrātā.  
Jana-gaṇa-patha-parichāyaka, jaya hē Bhārata-bhāgya-vidhātā.  
Jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya jaya jaya, jaya hē.

## IV

Ghōra-timira-ghana-nivida-nisīthē piḍita-mūrchhita dēśē  
Jāgrata chhila tava avichala maṅgala nata-nayanē animēṣē.

Duḥsvapnē ātaṅkē rakṣā karilē anḱē,  
snēhamayī tumi mātā.

Jana-gaṇa-duḥkhatrāyaka, jaya hē Bhārata-bhāgya-vidhātā.  
Jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya jaya jaya, jaya hē.

## V

Rātri prabhātila, udila ravichchhavi pūrva-udaya-giri-bhālē,  
Gāhe vihaṅgama, puṇya samīraṇa nava-jīvana-rasa dhālē.

Tava karuṇāruṇa-rāgē nidrita Bhārata jāgē  
tava charaṇē nata mātā.

Jaya jaya jaya hē, jaya rājēśvara, Bhārata-bhāgya-vidhātā.  
Jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya hē, jaya jaya jaya, jaya hē.

## NOTES ON PRONUNCIATION

1. In normal Bengali pronunciation the length or quantity of vowels is not fixed as in Sanskrit and some other Indo-Aryan languages, but depends on their position within the word as well as on some other factors. Bengali versification is usually based on normal Bengali pronunciation of vowels. But in some cases, as in the present case, the Sanskritic convention of regarding some vowels as short and some as long in a fixed manner is followed. In this poem ā (আ), ī (ই), ū (উ), ē (এ) and ō (ও) should be pronounced as long. But the vowel e (এ) of the word 'gāhe' (fifth stanza, second line) is short and should be taken as an exception. The final a (অ) of 'Vaṅga' and 'taraṅga' (first stanza, second and third lines) as well as the vowel i (ই) of the word 'rātri' (third stanza, second line) should be regarded as long following

the Sanskrit convention of taking short vowels at the end of a metrical line as long.

It should be noted that Bengali a (as in jana, gaṇa, jaya etc.) is not pronounced like Sanskrit a (अ), but is like o of the English word *hot*.

2. The closed vowel or *ruddha-svara* ai (ऐ) in the words 'Jaina' and 'aikya' as well as all closed syllables or *ruddha-dala*, such as sin (of Sindhu), ut (of Utkala), uch (of uchchhala) etc., should be regarded as long. Taking a short syllable as one unit or *mātrā* (*mora*) and a long syllable as two units we have in most lines 28 units; but in every stanza there is one metrical line consisting of 36 units. The shorter lines have a strong pause (*yati*) after the sixteenth *mora*; the longer lines have a strong pause after every twelve *morae*.

Śaṅkhadhvani and duḥkhatrātā (third stanza, third and fourth lines) duḥkhatrāyaka (fourth stanza, fifth line) should be pronounced as śaṅkhad-dhvani, duḥkhat-trātā, and duḥkhat-trāyaka respectively, khad and khat being regarded as closed syllables (*ruddha-dala*).

The first syllable (Pan) of the word 'Panjāba' (second line of the first stanza) should be regarded as an extra-metrical syllable (*atiparva*) and should not be taken into consideration in the moric calculation of the verse.

3. The following peculiarities of the Bengali pronunciation of consonants should be noted :

ṇa (ण) = na (न), e.g., gaṇa = gana ;

va (व) = ba (ब), e.g., Vaṅga = baṅga, tava = taba, but in dhvani (third stanza, third line) and duhsvapna (fourth stanza, third line) v is silent ;

ya (य) at the beginning of a word = ja (ज), e.g., yuga = juga, yātrī = jātrī ;

Śa (श), Ṣa (ष), Sa (स) = Śa (श) or *sh* as in the English word *shall*, e.g., animēṣē = animēṣē, Sindhu = śindhu, āsē = āsē, but snēha = snēha (not śnēha), rakṣā = rakkhā (not rakṣā) ; in the word gānthā (second stanza, fourth line) italicised *n* is not pronounced as such, it is only a symbol of nasalisation of the previous vowel—gānthā = गांथा.

P.C.S.

# JANA-GANA-MANA-ADHINĀYAKA

ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY THE AUTHOR

THOU art the ruler of the minds of all people,

Thou Dispenser of India's destiny.

The name rouses the hearts of the Punjab, Sind,

Gujrat and Maratha, of Dravida, Orissa and Bengal.

It echoes in the hills of the Vindhya and Himalayas,

mingles in the music of Jumna and Ganges,

and is chanted by the waves of the Indian Sea.

They pray for thy blessing and sing thy praise,

Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

Day and night, thy voice goes out from land to land,

calling Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains round thy throne

and Parsees, Mussalmans and Christians.

Offerings are brought to thy shrine by the East and the West

to be woven in a garland of love.

Thou bringest the hearts of all peoples into the harmony of one life,

Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

Eternal Charioteer, thou drivest man's history

along the road rugged with rises and falls of Nations.

Amidst all tribulations and terror

thy trumpet sounds to hearten those that despair and droop,

and guide all people in their paths of peril and pilgrimage.

Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

When the long dreary night was dense with gloom  
and the country lay still in a stupor,  
thy Mother's arms held her,  
thy wakeful eyes bent upon her face,  
till she was rescued from the dark evil dreams  
that oppressed her spirit,  
Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,  
Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

The night dawns, the sun rises in the East,  
the birds sing, the morning breeze brings a stir of new life.  
Touched by the golden rays of thy love  
India wakes up and bends her head at thy feet.  
Thou King of all kings, Thou Dispenser of India's destiny,  
Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

## OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM

Rabindranath Tagore's song *Janaganamana Adhinayaka* came, from the very day it was sung publicly, to occupy a unique place all over India, and even abroad, as one of our finest national songs. The attention of the whole country was focussed on it with reference to the question of selecting it as our National Anthem. But serious charges were also brought against it in this connection. It was therefore necessary to review the history of the song at length.

The charges were mainly these: first, that the song was a eulogy of King George V, composed on the occasion of his visit to India, and according to some, sung at the Coronation Durbar at Delhi; secondly, that it was actually a devotional song and as such could be given the status of a patriotic song, but did not deserve the prestige of the National Anthem; and thirdly, that it had no all-India appeal—some of the provinces were not mentioned in it, so that they could not very well accept it as the National Anthem.

A careful study of the text and the history of the song will bring out clearly the fact that these charges have no basis whatsoever. The matter is discussed in detail here on the basis of historical documents which should prove conclusive even for those who insist on concrete evidence.

Of the charges mentioned above, the first is the most serious and should, therefore, be taken up first.

## 2

### THE POET'S INDIGNATION

Rabindranath himself said in a letter (20.11.1937) regarding the origin of the song:

A friend, influential in Government circles, had importuned me to compose a song in praise of the King. His request had amazed me, and the amazement was mingled with anger. It was under the stress of this violent reaction that I proclaimed in the Janaganamana Adhinayaka song, the victory of that Dispenser of India's destiny who chariots eternally the travellers through the ages along the paths rugged with the rise and fall of nations—of Him who dwells within the heart of man and leads the multitudes. That the Great Charioteer of Man's destiny in age after age could not by any means be George the Fifth or George the Sixth or any other George, even my 'loyal' friend realised ; because, however powerful his loyalty to the King, he was not wanting in intelligence.

—*Vichitrā*, Paush 1344, p. 709.

In the same context Rabindranath says in another letter (29.3.1939) :

I should only insult myself if I cared to answer those who consider me capable of such **unbounded stupidity** as to sing in praise of George the Fourth or George the Fifth as the Eternal Charioteer leading the pilgrims on their journey through countless ages of the timeless history of mankind.

—*Purvāśā*, Phalgun 1354, p. 738.

### 3

#### HISTORY OF THE SONG—THE CONGRESS OF 1911

Some people are under the impression that the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' was composed for and sung on the occasion of the Coronation Durbar of King George V at

Delhi. No evidence, however, has been found in support of this strange impression. Detailed descriptions of the Delhi Durbar and of other functions in connection with the King's visit to Calcutta are found in the official publication known as *The Historical Record of the Imperial Visit to India, 1911* published by John Murray, London, in 1914 under the authority and order of the then Viceroy of India. No mention of the song is found anywhere in this publication. It is clear, therefore, that the odium of its association with a British king at the Delhi Durbar that is imputed to this song is utterly baseless.

It is now well-known that the song was first sung in 1911 at the second day's sitting of the Indian National Congress (December 27) held at Calcutta. The Congress was then under the influence of moderate leaders like Surendranath Banerjea. Only a fortnight before (December 12) King George V had proclaimed at the Delhi Durbar the annulment of the partition of Bengal. The king was due to arrive in Calcutta on December 30, two days after the conclusion of the Congress session. Jubilant over the said proclamation, the moderate leaders decided to welcome the royal couple with a declaration of loyalty from the Congress platform and a suitable song became necessary for the occasion. Possibly it was with a request for such a song that Rabindranath Tagore was approached. But the Poet would not compose a song in praise of the emperor of India which he considered to be an act of 'unbounded stupidity', and sang instead the victory of the 'Eternal Charioteer' to whose glory alone he was capable of singing. The friend mentioned above realised that such a song could not be used as a welcome to a mortal king.

A song in praise of the English king was necessary, however. Rabindranath, therefore, had to be given up and a search made elsewhere. A song that satisfied the requirements of the moderate leaders was also found in time, and with this,



as I shall show later, 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' was confused by some reporters, ultimately leading to the present controversy.

The first day's proceedings of the Indian National Congress held in Calcutta in 1911 opened with the singing of 'Vande Mataram'. That day's sitting concluded with the speeches of the Chairman of the Reception Committee and the President of the session. The second day's sitting began with the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' after which messages of good will from well-wishers were read out. A resolution was then passed welcoming the royal couple and expressing loyalty to them. Following this was sung a *Hindi song in praise of the king, composed specially for the occasion*. This was the song that had consoled the moderate leaders like the 'loyal' friend mentioned above after Rabindranath had disappointed them. Thereafter ten other resolutions were passed, and the sitting then concluded. The third day's sitting commenced with the singing of 'Atīta-Gaurava-vāhinī mama vānī gāha āji Hindusthān'. Later, with the passing of twenty-two more resolutions, the session came to an end.

A reference to the contemporary press and other reports will throw more light on the character of the song 'Janaganamana':

#### 1. OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE 28TH SESSION OF THE CONGRESS

The proceedings commenced with a *patriotic song* composed by Babu Rabindranath Tagore. [After this are reports of messages received from friends and the passing of the loyalty resolution moved from the chair.] After that a *song of welcome* to Their Imperial Majesties composed for the occasion was sung by the choir.

It will be observed that a distinction has been made in this report between the two songs. One is called a patriotic song and the other a song of welcome to the royal couple. This

also proves how true was Rabindranath's statement that in spite of their great loyalty to the king, the moderates of those days did not lack in intelligence. They neither considered nor used the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' as a eulogy of the king.

## 2. AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA, 28 DECEMBER 1911

The proceedings began with the singing of a *Bengali song of benediction*. . . . This [the loyalty resolution] was followed by another *song in honour of Their Imperial Majesties visit to India*.

Here also the difference in character of the two songs has been clearly brought out. The dictionary meaning of 'benediction' is—'a solemn *invocation of the divine blessings* on men and things'. The significance of the word 'benediction' will be made clearer later.

## 3. THE BENGALIEE, 28 DECEMBER 1911

The proceedings commenced with a *patriotic song* composed by Babu Rabindranath Tagore, the leading poet of Bengal (Janaganamana Adhinayaka), of which we give the English translation—'King of the heart of nations, Lord of our country's fate . . .' then [after the passing of the loyalty resolution] a *Hindi song paying heartfelt homage* to Their Imperial Majesties was sung by the Bengali boys and girls in chorus.

Surendranath Banerjea was the principal organiser of the 1911 session of the Congress; full details of the session are therefore naturally found in his paper. In this report,—as in that of the Congress, a distinction has been made between the patriotic song and the song of welcome.

Let us now consider the Anglo-Indian Journals.

#### 4. THE ENGLISHMAN, 28 DECEMBER 1911

The proceedings opened with a *song of welcome* to the King Emperor, specially composed for the occasion by Babu Rabindranath Tagore. . . . This [loyalty resolution] was followed by *another song in Hindi welcoming Their Imperial Majesties*.

According to this report the Bengali song by Rabindranath was also a song of welcome to the king. This is in contradiction of the Congress Report and those appearing in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Bengalee*. Here, apparently, lies the source of the oft-repeated calumny against the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka'.

#### 5. THE STATESMAN, 28 DECEMBER 1911

The proceedings commenced shortly before 12 o'clock with a *Bengali song*. . . The choir of girls led by Sarala Devi then [after the loyalty resolution] sang a *hymn of welcome* to the king specially composed for the occasion by Babu Rabindranath Tagore, the Bengali poet.

No mention has been made in this report of the composer of the opening song in Bengali. It admitted indirectly, however, that the song was not a eulogy of the king ; had it been so considered, there could have been no reason for not mentioning it. From the report that the second song was composed by 'Babu Rabindranath Tagore, the Bengali poet', it is clear that the *Statesman* was under the impression that this was also a Bengali song. This report partly contradicts the Indian reports like the Congress Report and partly also that of the *Englishman*. Apparently the *Statesman* reporter did not know that it was the opening song of the day that was composed by Rabindranath. Hence the confusion.

#### 6. REUTER

When the Indian National Congress resumed its session on

Wednesday, December 27, a Bengali song specially composed in honour of the royal visit was sung and a resolution welcoming the King Emperor and Queen Empress was adopted unanimously.

The above report was sent by Reuter and was published in *India*, a weekly journal in England, on 29.12.1911. This does not tally with that of the *Statesman* and the Indian reports; it partly agrees only with that of the *Englishman*.

It will be noticed that there is complete unanimity in the reports of the three Indian sources quoted above while those emanating from the last three sources are mutually conflicting and completely contradict the Indian reports. The song that has been called 'patriotic' in the Congress and other reports, has been termed as a 'song' or 'hymn of welcome' by the *Statesman* and the *Englishman*. Reuter has committed the same mistake. Further, the song mentioned as a song of welcome to the king by the Congress and other Indian sources, has been completely left out by the *Statesman* and Reuter. All the three Indian sources report that one song of welcome (the Hindi song) was sung after the loyalty resolution was passed, whereas the *Englishman* has produced two songs of welcome—one prior and the other subsequent to the loyalty resolution. The *Statesman* did not make this mistake, but it made another and even greater one. According to the Congress Report the sitting commenced with Rabindranath's song, whilst the *Statesman* places it after the loyalty resolution. There are other serious discrepancies too in the *Statesman's* report of the Congress session. This clearly proves that the reporters of these two journals and Reuter were intent on giving publicity to the loyalty portion of the session rather than accurately reporting the actual proceedings. None of these three sources therefore, can be accepted as reliable. Moreover, it is needless to place any reliance on them when we have before us the official

report of the Congress, the reports of the Indian newspapers and lastly the utterances of Rabindranath himself.

It is not known whether Rabindranath had contradicted these reports. Possibly he considered it insulting to himself to contradict the 'unbounded stupidity' of the *Englishman*, etc. It is also possible that the reports in Anglo-Indian papers escaped his attention. Anyhow, the mere fact that a bit of false news has not been contradicted does not necessarily make it true. However, a review, of the later history of the song will convince the reader that the reports of the *Englishman*, *Statesman* and *Reuter* are completely without any foundation. I propose now to trace that history.

#### 4

### 'A SONG IN PRAISE OF THE DISPENSER OF HUMAN DESTINY'

As noted, 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' was first sung at the Indian National Congress on December 27, 1911. A glance at its further history in the next month will convince the reader of the real character of the song.

1. In January, 1912, one month after the Congress session, the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' was first published under the title *Bharata-vidhata* in the *Tattvabodhini Patrika* (the official organ of the Adi Brahmo Samaj), of which Rabindranath himself was the Editor. It had also a sub-title—'Brahma-sangit'—which substantiates the Poet's declaration, quoted earlier, that it was the King of kings that was addressed as *Bharata-vidhata*, and no earthly king or emperor.<sup>1</sup>

2. In the same month *Bharati*, a Bengali monthly, published

<sup>1</sup> It may be stated in this connection that the English rendering of the song as published in the *Bengalee* on December 28, 1911 is an exact translation of the original published in the *Tattvabodhini Patrika* of January 1912.

an account of the Congress session, by a writer who was evidently present on all the three days, giving an interesting description of the songs that were sung in that session. This has special value as contemporary evidence. The relevant extracts are given below:

The Indian National Congress held its session on 26, 27 and 28 December last. Each day's proceedings commenced with a song to the glory of the motherland. The first day's song was an invocation to the mother-image of India with her hurrying streams and rich green fields; the song of the second day was in praise of the Dispenser of human destiny, the Lord of the three worlds who, परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय, appears in every age; the third day's song was a hymn to Hindusthan, the rich repository of the memories of past glories. These songs, in which the sweet voices of the girls mingled with the deep voices of the men, filled one's heart with reverence and brought tears to the eyes. Like the smell of burning incense which prepares the mind for worship, the hymns sung by the choir of youths and girls produced a feeling of adoration in the mind.

—*Bharati*, Magh 1318, pp. 996-97.

According to this description, the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' is both a song of glory to the motherland and a hymn in praise of the Lord of the Universe, the Dispenser of human destiny. Further, according to the writer, the Divine Charioteer of Arjuna, who said सम्भवामि युगे युगे, is the same Eternal Charioteer who drives India's history through the ages along the road rugged with the rise and fall of nations. This description, once again refutes the reports of the *Englishman*, the *Statesman* and *Reuter*.

3. Later, in the same month of Magh (January 25), this song was sung at the Maghotsava ceremony at the Tagore household under the direction of Rabindranath himself. Thus

there can hardly be any doubt that the song was addressed to the Lord of the Universe and not to any mortal being. At the same Maghotsava ceremony Rabindranath delivered an address entitled 'The New Era in Religion' which ended thus:

"May we stake our all and fearlessly join Man's triumphant march towards the eternal.

जय जय जय हे, जय विश्वेश्वर, मानवभाग्यविधाता ।"

(Glory be unto the Lord of the Universe,

The Dispenser of human destiny)

—*Tattvabodhini Patrika*, Phalgun 1318, p. 272.  
and *Bharati*, Phalgun 1318, p. 1089.

We have already seen that shortly before this address the *Bharati*, in its account of the Congress session, described the Being invoked in the song 'Janaganamana' as the 'Dispenser of human destiny'. The two utterances of Rabindranath, quoted at the beginning of this article, have described Him as the Eternal Charioteer of human destiny. This description of the Dispenser of human destiny as *Bharat-vidhata* at different times and by different people is certainly not without significance. It is also not surprising, coming as it does, from Rabindranath Tagore the votary of humanism and the devotee of the Eternal Man.

## 5

### A SECRET OFFICIAL CIRCULAR

4. On the day subsequent to the Maghotsava ceremony (January 26) the following secret circular issued by the Director of Public Instruction of what was then the province of East Bengal and Assam found its way into the columns of the *Bengalee* (26 January 1912, p. 4):

It has come to my knowledge that an institution known as the 'Santiniketan' or 'Brahmacharyasrama' at Bolpur in the Birbhum District of Bengal is a place *altogether unsuitable for the education of the sons of Government servants*. As I have information that some Government servants in this province have sent their children there, I think it necessary to ask you to warn any well-disposed Government servant whom you may know or believe to have sons at this institution or to be about to send sons to it, to withdraw them or refrain from sending them, as the case may be ; *any connection with the institution in question is likely to prejudice the future of the boys who remain pupils of it after the issue of the present warning*.

The circular did immense harm to Santiniketan as many students had to leave. The song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' was sung at the Congress session in December and only a month later—at the time of admission of new students—the circular was issued. It is clear that if Rabindranath had descended to the level of a panegyrist of the king, such a circular would never have been necessary.

It is well-known that Rabindranath and Santiniketan were not in the good books of the Government, owing to the Poet's political views and his independence of spirit and opinion. It is also well-known that from his early youth Rabindranath had strongly criticised the 'prayer and petition' politics of the moderates. Even before the Swadeshi Movement he had been insisting on reliance on self-help, and in the movement following the partition of Bengal that stirred the whole province to its depths, he occupied a distinguished place among the leaders. He was also one of the pioneers of the Sivaji Utsava and a fearless champion of Aurobindo Ghose who had incurred the wrath of the British government. The place he occupied in the hearts of his countrymen, at the time when the song under



discussion was composed is well illustrated by the following extract from a contemporary newspaper report:

He [Rabindranath] has not only been a life-long devotee of the Bengali language and literature, but has rendered conspicuous service, by means of his writings, to the cause of national self-help and self-reliance of which he was undoubtedly one of the pioneers.

—*The Bengalee*, 31 January 1912, p. 4.

It is needless to state that such a person could never have been in the good books of the Government.

In his estimate of Rabindranath's patriotism Ramananda Chatterjee, Editor, *The Modern Review*, wrote about his songs:

His patriotic songs are characteristic. Some of them enthrone the Motherland as the Adored in the shrines of our souls, some sound the clarion call to our drooping spirits, filling us with hope and the will to do and dare and suffer.

And further, that they—

Make the heart beat thick and fast, and the blood tingle and leap and course in our veins.

—*The Modern Review*, February 1912, p. 229.

The extracts from the documents quoted above prove conclusively that it was the Lord of the Universe, and no earthly king, who has been described and invoked as *Bharat-vidhata* in the song 'Janaganamana'. Hence it was incorporated in Rabindranath's *Dharma-Sangit*, a collection of religious hymns. It is well-known that Rabindranath's patriotism was not divorced from his spirituality. At about the same time that the song was composed. *The Modern Review* (February 1912, p. 230) said that 'his politics and his spiritual ministrations

merge in each other'. That is why the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' was sung both at the Congress session and at the Maghotsava ceremony. This song, like 'Vande Mataram', has transformed the spiritual urge into the patriotic, with this difference—the former is completely non-sectarian or 'all-sectarian' in its spirit, while the same cannot be said of the latter.

## 6

### THE POET'S MIND

The evidence produced so far demolishes the charge that the song was conceived as a eulogy of King George V. An analysis of Rabindranath's thinking at that time will also bear this out.

The ideal that inspired Rabindranath's patriotic novel *Gora*, published early in 1910, is forcefully brought out by the hero's utterances towards the end of the book:

Today I am really an Indian! In me there is no longer any opposition between Hindu, Mussalman and Christian. Today every caste in India is my caste! . . . Today give me the *mantram* of that Deity who belongs to all, Hindu, Mussalman, Christian and Brahmo alike. . . He who is not merely the God of the Hindus, but who is the God of India herself.

—*Gora*, Chapter 76.

It is this 'God of India herself' who has been described as *Bharat-vidhata* in the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka'. Here also *Bharat-vidhata* has been described as the God of the Hindu, Mussalman, Christian, Parsee etc.

Rabindranath's famous poem 'Bharat-tirtha'<sup>2</sup> was composed on July 2, 1910, shortly after *Gora* was published. Here also

<sup>2</sup> O heart of mine, awake in this holy place of pilgrimage,  
In this land of India, on the shore of vast humanity.

as in 'Janaganamana' we find the contemplation of India's physical entity in the beginning and then the message of unity to all her communities. This strain occurs again and again in all his political writings and this was the ideal that he propagated to his last days. Here are a few instances.

In the year 1917, a few months before the Calcutta session of the Congress, when for various reasons the province of Bengal was in a state of high political tension, the Poet published his famous article *Thou Shalt Obey* and, as a sequel, the well-known song 'Desa Desa Nandita Kari' (*Prabasi*, Bhadra 1324, pp. 509-22). He writes in that article as a prologue to the song—"The ageless and ever wakeful *Deity of our country* is calling to our souls." It will be noticed that the spirit behind the two songs 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' and 'Desa Desa Nandita Kari' is essentially the same and that even the language is similar. For example, the following lines from 'Janaganamana':

Eternal Charioteer, thou drivest man's history  
along the road rugged with rises and falls of Nations.  
Amidst all tribulations and terror  
thy trumpet sounds to hearten those that despair and droop...

may well compare with the following from 'Desa Desa Nandita Kari':

The world's highroads are crowded,  
resounding with the roar of thy chariot wheels.

Here do I stand with arms outstretched to salute man divine,  
And sing his praise in many a gladsome pæan.  
These hills that are rapt in deep meditation.  
These plains that clasp their rosaries of rivers,  
Here you will find earth that is ever sacred,  
In this land of India, on the shore of vast humanity.  
Come Aryan, non-Aryan, Hindu, Mussalman, come,  
Come ye Parsees, O Christians come ye one and all.  
Come Brahmins, let your hearts be hallowed by holding all men by  
the hand.  
Come all ye who are shunned and isolated, wipe out all dishonour.  
Come to the crowning of the Mother, fill the sacred bowl  
With water that is sanctified by the touch of all  
In this land of India, on the shore of vast humanity.

Thus the invocations in the novel *Gora* and the three poems Bharat-tirtha, Janaganamana-Adhinayaka and Desa Desa Nandita Kari can, by no stretch of imagination, be considered as made to a foreign king. The inspiration behind them was in fact quite the reverse and eventually led the Poet to renounce his Knighthood less than two years after the last-mentioned song was composed.

Mention must be made here of the Poet's 'India's Prayer', translated from his original Bengali poems during the latter part of the same year, as there is a striking similarity between this poem and the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka'.

## 7

### ‘A SONG OF THE VICTORY OF INDIA’—THE CONGRESS<sup>\*</sup> OF 1917

Now let us turn to the Congress session of 1917. The Congress, when it held its Calcutta session in 1917, was no longer dominated by the moderates; the 'extremist' leaders were in the forefront. Rabindranath himself was present at this session and read out the poem 'India's Prayer' as the opening invocation.<sup>2</sup> The first day's sitting (December 26) commenced as usual with the singing of 'Vande Mataram'. Of the other songs sung on

<sup>2</sup> "Then Sir Rabindranath rose to offer his benedictions in a melodious and inspiring verse specially composed for the occasion."

—*The Bengalee*, 27 December 1917.

The Official Report of the Congress (p. 1) states:

"The Chairman of the Reception Committee then called upon Sir Rabindranath Tagore to read out his *opening invocation*. Sir Rabindra, who received tremendous ovation, then recited the following verse in a voice which, reaching the farthest corner of the pandal, hushed the vast audience with its music and heart-felt eloquence."

The similarity of ideas in 'Janaganamana' and 'India's Prayer' has already been mentioned. It will be enough to state here that in 1911 the first was called a song of *benediction* and in 1917 the second has also been described as *benediction* or *invocation*. Both are in the same category; both offer India's heart-felt prayer to the Lord of the Universe.

that day special mention must be made of 'Desa Desa Nandita Kari':

A number of other songs were also sung in the musical programme including Sir Rabindranath's *latest patriotic song* 'Desa Desa Nandita Kari'.

—*The Bengalee*, 27 December 1917.

The second day's sitting commenced with Sarala Devi's song 'Atita-Gaurava-vāhini' and the third day's with 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka'. The newspaper reports of this latter song are given below—

The Congress chorus then chanted the *magnificent song* of Sir Rabindranath Tagore, *Jana-gana-mana*, Maharaja Bahadur of Nattore himself joining in aid of the instrumental music.

—*The Bengalee*, 30 December 1917.

The Indian National Congress sat at 11 A.M., the proceedings commencing with an *inspiring patriotic song* of Rabindranath as usual in chorus, the Maharaja of Nattore joining in instrumental music.

—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 31 December 1917.

A *national song* composed by Sir Rabindranath Tagore having been sung the following resolution was moved. . .

—*The Statesman*, 30 December 1917.

The last report is highly significant. The reader will do well to note that what to the Englishman, Statesman and Reuter was a song of welcome to the King in 1911 was considered, by the Statesman at least, a national song in 1917.

In that day's sitting Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das paid high tribute from the platform to this song. The official report of the Congress reproduced Deshabandhu's speech:

Brother delegates, at the very outset I desire to refer to the song to which you have just listened. **It is a song of the glory and victory of India.** We stand today on this platform for the glory and victory of India (cheers).

*The Bengalee*, 30 December 1917, reports:

Mr. C. R. Das . . . desired to refer to the song which they had just listened to. **It was the song of the victory of India** (hear, hear). They stood there that day on the platform for the glory and victory of India (hear, hear).

*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 31 December 1917, gives an identical report.

If the song had been composed and sung in honour of the king in 1911, when the moderates were in power, then it could never have been sung and unanimously accepted as a patriotic song in the Congress of 1917 when it had passed into the control of the extremists. It is needless to state that Deshabandhu had enough literary sense to appreciate the true spirit of the song and it is not without reason that Subhas Chandra, his disciple, was so devoted to it.

## 8

### AN ALL-INDIA SONG

In the year 1927, in a letter written from Java (31 August), Rabindranath writes:

In the course of our history, India had once deeply realised her geographical entity ; she established in her mind an image of her own physical self by meditating on her rivers and

hills. . . In my song of the victory of *Bharat-vidhata* composed a few years ago, I have put together a number of Indian provinces ; Vindhya-Himachala and Yamuna-Ganga have also been mentioned. I feel, however, that a song should be written in which all the provinces, rivers and hills of India are strung together in order to impress upon the minds of our people an idea of the geography of our country. We are nowadays profuse in the use of the term *National Consciousness*, but what kind of national consciousness can there be, devoid of actual geographical and ethnological realisation?

—*Jāvāyātrir Patra, Letter 10.*

It is seen here that according to Rabindranath the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' is a song of the victory of *Bhārat-vidhātā* and is not meant to be an inventory of geographical names. All the provinces, rivers and hills are not, therefore, mentioned in the song, which is intended only to portray India in her entirety. The provinces left out have no reason, therefore, to feel aggrieved.

## 9

### "THE MORNING SONG OF INDIA"

In the year 1919, during his tour of South India, Rabindranath spent five days at the Theosophical College, Madanapalle, at the invitation of Principal James H. Cousins. There he sang the song 'Janaganamana' at some function. The audience was very much moved by the tune and at their request he made an English translation of the song and called it 'The Morning Song of India'. The college authorities, greatly impressed by the tune and the lofty ideals of the song, selected it as their prayer song to be sung every morning before the day's work commenced. In a letter (23.7.34) Principal Cousins writes:

Every working morning Janaganamana is sung by hundreds of young people in our big hall. We want to extend its purifying influence by sending copies of it to other schools and colleges in India and by making it known abroad.

Later, in the year 1936, the translation mentioned above was printed in the Poet's own handwriting in the College Commemoration Volume and distributed widely, with a note that this 'would become *one of the world's most precious documents*. . . From Madanapalle Janagana has spread all over India, and is admired in Europe and America.'

In the next year (1937), when a bitter controversy was raging throughout the whole country over the selection of India's National Anthem, Principal Cousins issued a statement to the Press (3.11.37) in which he stated:

My suggestion is that Dr. Rabindranath's own *intensely patriotic*, ideally stimulating, and at the same time world-embracing *Morning Song of India (Janaganamana)* should be confirmed *officially*, as *what it has for almost twenty years been unofficially, namely, the true National Anthem of India*.

## 10

### THE CONGRESS AND THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

The main portion of a resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee, sitting in Calcutta on October 28, 1937, is given below:

Taking all things into consideration, therefore, the Committee recommends that wherever the 'Bande Mataram' is sung at national gatherings only the first two stanzas should be sung, with perfect freedom to the organisers to sing any other song of an unobjectionable character, in addition to, or *in place of*, the 'Bande Mataram' song.



## The Morning song of India

Thou art the ruler of the minds of all people, dispenser of India's destiny. Thy name rouses the hearts of the Panjab, Sind, Gujarat and Maratha, of Saurashtra and Orissa and Bengal; it echoes in the hills of the Vindhya and Himalayas, mingles in the music of the Keeris and the Jamuna, and is chanted by the surging waves of the Indian Sea. They pray for thy blessings and sing thy praise. The saving of all people waits in thy hand, thou dispenser of India's destiny.

Oh Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

Day and night thy voice goes out from land to land <sup>calling</sup> ~~bringing~~ the Hindus, Buddhists, Shikhs and Jains round thy throne and the Parsees, Musalmans and Christians. The East and the West join hands in their prayers to thee, and the garland of love is woven. Thou bringest the hearts of all people into the harmony of one life, thou dispenser of India's destiny.

Victory, victory, victory to thee.

The procession of pilgrims passes over the endless road rugged with the rise and fall of nations; and it resounds with the thunder of thy wheels, Eternal Character! Through the dire days of doom thy trumpet sounds and men are led by thee across death. Thy finger points the path to all people, Oh dispenser of India's destiny!

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee!

The darkness was dense and deep was the night. My country lay in a deathlike silence of swoon. Out thy mother's arms were round her and thine eyes gazed upon her troubled face in sleepless love through her hours of ghastly dreams. Thou art the companion and the saviour of the people in their sorrows, thou dispenser of India's destiny.

Victory, victory, Victory to thee!

The night ~~turns~~ <sup>fade</sup>; the light breaks over the peaks of the Eastern hills; the birds begin to sing and the morning breeze carries the breath of new life. The rays of thy mercy have touched the waking land with their blessing. Victory to thee King of Kings, Victory to thee, the dispenser of India's destiny.

Victory, Victory, Victory to thee.

Rabindranath Tagore

Feb. 28. 1919

A Sub-committee was formed from among the Working Committee members for selecting the songs that could be sung 'in addition to or in place of Vande Mataram'. In the Sub-committee were Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the then President of the Congress and Subhas Chandra Bose. Of the songs to be selected by this Sub-committee it was stated by the Working Committee that

only such songs as are composed in simple Hindusthani or can be adapted to it, and have a rousing and inspiring tune will be accepted by the Sub-committee for examination. The Sub-committee shall consult and take the advice of Poet Rabindranath Tagore.

The resolution passed by the Working Committee was then ratified by the A.I.C.C., also sitting in Calcutta at that time. Possibly no such song was ultimately selected. We find, however, that both Pandit Nehru and Subhas Chandra later accepted 'Janaganamana' as India's National Anthem. When Subhas Chandra formed his Azad Hind Fauz in Germany, it was 'Janaganamana' that was selected as the National Anthem. Later also in South-East Asia this song was given the status of the National Anthem. At that time a Hindusthani rendering of the song was made at Subhas Chandra's instance. In spite of the slight verbal alterations made in the Hindusthani version, the tune and the spirit of the original have remained intact. As a matter of fact the Azad Hind Government considered the Hindusthani version the same as the original so that in the directions contained in the Arze Hakumat-I-Azad Hind it has been stated that '*Tagore's song Jaya-ho has become our National Anthem.*'<sup>4</sup>

## 11

### JANAGANAMANA AND THE I.N.A.

Subhas Chandra fully endorsed the Congress leaders' proposal

<sup>4</sup> Vide *The Diary of a Rebel Daughter of India*.

to cut out portions of 'Vande Mataram' as, according to him, 'the Congress cannot consider anything from the point of view of Bengal or any particular community alone—today all problems must be considered from an all-India view-point'. He also had no objection to accepting any other song as the National Anthem if that song were found to be more suitable and appropriate in tune and idea than 'Vande Mataram'. At the time of founding the Azad Hind Government, therefore, we find him accepting the Congress flag with the charkha-emblem, but unwilling to accept the abbreviated 'Vande Mataram'. We find him instead accepting Rabindranath's 'song of the victory of India' as the National Anthem. This clearly proves that he considered 'Janaganamana' the most suitable National Anthem for India. The statement recently issued by Sri Anandmohan Sahay, Minister, Azad Hind Government also supports this view.

Sri Sahay also says that

So far as language is concerned it does not play such an important part as the tune of an anthem when played in a foreign country or at an international gathering.

The song 'Janaganamana' has long been accepted as far superior to any other song from the standpoint of inspiring music. We find from Sri Sahay's statement that the people of Thailand, Burma, China, etc., were highly impressed by the tune of this song and that even the people of Germany and Japan, who are so proud of their own anthems, admitted that the tune of 'Janaganamana' was no less inspiring than their own.

The appeal of the song 'Janaganamana' is both universal and eternal. It is thus most suited to be selected as the National Anthem of India with all her provinces and communities. The spirit which prompted Subhas Chandra to support the abridgement of 'Vande Mataram' in 1937 was probably the same spirit that led him to select 'Janaganamana' later as India's National Anthem.

This selection did not belie his expectations. The ideal that led the Azad Hind Fauz heroically to lay down their lives in Kohima and Imphal, immortalising these battlefields in India's history, was without doubt greatly inspired by the spirit of the song 'Janaganamana' and its rousing tune. The establishing of the Azad Hind Government and the heroic deeds of the Azad Hind Fauz are inseparably connected with this song. Thus the song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka' has not only earned for itself the glorious tradition of being associated with an unforgettable chapter in India's history, it has also added considerably to the rich store-house of Indian traditions.

## 12

### FORMAL ADOPTION AS INDIA'S NATIONAL ANTHEM

The proceedings of the historic session of Indian Constituent Assembly at midnight of the 14th August 1947 opened with the singing of *Vande Mataram* and ended with *Janaganamana*, the two premier national songs of India at the time. Soon after Independence the Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, consulted the Provincial Governors and Premiers about adopting *Janaganamana* or any other song as the National Anthem. All but two provinces signified their approval of *Janaganamana*. The Prime Minister himself was also in favour of this song. So the Union Cabinet decided that *Janaganamana* should be provisionally recognised as India's National Anthem, the final decision resting with the Constituent Assembly. Thereafter the song gained practical acceptance throughout the country as our National Anthem. On 15 August 1948, the Sikh Regiment Central struck the tune of the song at the hoisting of the National Flag at the first anniversary of Independence at the Red Fort in Delhi. Ten days later the Prime Minister made a statement in Parliament about the

urgency of selecting a National Anthem at an early date and gave his reasons for preferring *Janaganamana*.

In the meantime the Constituent Assembly appointed a Committee to make recommendations about the final selection of a National Anthem. But after deliberations it was thought desirable to leave it with the President to make a declaration in the Assembly on the question of adopting a National Anthem for India. Accordingly, when the Constituent Assembly of India finally met in the Constitution Hall on 24 January 1950 to sign the Constitution, President Dr. Rajendra Prasad declared his decision on the matter in his opening statement:

There is one matter which has been pending for discussion, namely, the question of the National Anthem. At one time it was thought that the matter might be brought up before the House and a decision taken by the House by way of a resolution. But it has been felt that instead of taking a formal decision by means of a resolution it was better if I make a statement with regard to the National Anthem. Accordingly, I make this statement—

‘The composition consisting of the words and music known as *Janaganamana* is the National Anthem of India subject to such alteration in the words as Government may authorise as occasion arises; and the song *Vande Mataram* which has played a historic part in the struggle for Indian freedom shall be honoured equally with *Janaganamana* and shall have equal status with it.’

—*Constituent Assembly Debates*, XII. ii.

After the Constitution had been signed by all the members of the Assembly, the President, on the request of Sri Ananthasayanam Ayyangar permitted all members of the House to sing *Janaganamana* in chorus. Then led by Shrimati Purnima Banerji all of them sang it in chorus for the first time after its formal adoption as our National Anthem.

## जनगणमन-अधिनायक

जनगणमन-अधिनायक जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
पंजाब सिंधु गुजराट मराठा द्राविड उत्कल वंग  
विंध्य हिमाचल यमुना गंगा उच्छलजलधितरंग  
तव शुभ नामे जागे, तव शुभ आशिस मागे,  
गाहे तव जयगाथा ।

जनगणमंगलदायक जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥

अहरह तव आह्वान प्रचारित, शुनि तव उदार वाणी  
हिंदु बौद्ध शिख जैन पारसिक मुसलमान ख्रिस्टानी  
पूरब-पश्चिम आसे तव सिंहासन-पाशे,  
प्रेमहार हय गाँथा ।

जनगण-ऐक्यविधायक जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥

पतन-अभ्युदय-बंधुर पन्था, युगयुगधावित यात्री,  
हे चिरसारथि, तव रथचक्रे मुखरित पथ दिनरात्रि ।  
दारुण-विप्लव-मान्ने तव शंखध्वनि बाजे,  
संकटदुःखत्राता ।

जनगणपथपरिचायक जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥

घोर तिमिरघन निविड निशीथे पीडित मूर्छित देशे  
जाग्रत छिल तव अविचल मंगल नतनयने अनिमेषे ।

दुःस्वप्ने आतंके रक्षा करिले अंके,

स्नेहमयी तुमि माता ।

जनगणदुःखत्रायक जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।

जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥

रात्रि प्रभातिल, उदिल रविच्छवि पूर्व-उदयगिरिभाले,  
गाहे विहंगम, पुण्य समीरण नवजीवनरस ढाले ।

तव करुणारुण-रागे निद्रित भारत जागे

तव चरणे नत माथा ।

जय जय जय हे, जय राजेश्वर, भारतभाग्यविधाता ।

जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥

# जनगणमन-अधिनायक

## पद्यानुवाद

जनगणमन-अधिनायक, जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
पंजाब सिन्ध गुजरात मराठा द्राविड़ उत्कल बंग  
विंध्य-हिमाचल यमुना-गंगा उच्छल जलधितरंग  
तव शुभ नामे जागे, तव शुभ आशिस मांगे,  
गाए तव जयगाथा ।

जनगणमंगलदायक, जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥

प्रतिदिन-मुखरित सुन उदार वाणी तेरी ( सुखदाई )  
हिन्दु बौद्ध सिख जैन पारसी मुसलमान ईसाई  
पूरब-पश्चिम आते, प्रेमहार पहनाते,  
( निखिल विश्व बलि जाता । )

जनगण-ऐक्यविधायक, जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥

विकट पंथ उत्थानपतनमय युगयुग-धावित यात्री,  
हे चिरसारथि, तव रथचक्रे मुखरित पथ दिन-रात्रि,  
दारुण-विप्लव-मौंमे तव शंखध्वनि बाजे,  
संकट-दुखपरित्राता ।

जनगणपथपरिचायक, जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥



घोर-अंध-तम-विकल निशा भयमूर्छित देशजनों में  
जागृत था तव अविचल मंगल नत-अनिमिष नयनों में  
दुःस्वप्ने आतंके आश्रय तव मृदु अंके,  
स्नेहमयी तुम माता ।

जनगण-संकट-त्रायक, जय हे भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥

रात्रि विगत, रवि उदित उदयगिरि पर मोहक सुषमा ले,  
कूज रहे खग, पूत वायु जग नवजीवनरस ढाले ।  
तव करुणारुण-रागे निद्रित भारत जाने  
तव चरणे नत माथा ।

जय जय जय हे, जय राजेश्वर, भारतभाग्यविधाता ।  
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय जय जय, जय हे ॥

# जनगणमन-अधिनायक

## गद्यानुवाद

(हे) जनगण के मन के अधिनायक, हे भारत के भाग्य-विधाता, तुम्हारी जय हो ।  
(ये) पंजाब, सिन्ध, गुजरात, महाराष्ट्र, द्रविड़देश, उड़ीसा और बंगाल (के निवासी)  
(तथा) विंध्याचल, हिमालय, यमुना, गंगा और छलकती तरंगोंवाले समुद्र  
(के प्रदेशों में बसनेवाले मनुष्य)

तुम्हारे शुभनाम से जागते हैं, तुम्हारा शुभ आशीर्वाद माँगते हैं,  
(और) तुम्हारी विजय के गान गाते हैं ।

हे जनसमूह के मंगलदाता, हे भारतवर्ष के भाग्य-विधाता, तुम्हारी जय हो,  
बार-बार जय हो, जय हो ।

प्रतिदिन तुम्हारा आह्वान (दूर दूर तक) प्रचारित होता है ; तुम्हारी उदार  
वाणी को सुनकर

हिन्दू, बौद्ध, सिक्ख, जैन, पारसी, मुसलमान (और) ईसाई  
(तथा) पूर्व (और) पश्चिम (के निवासी) आते हैं तुम्हारे इस सिंहासन के पास,  
(उनके) प्रेम का द्वार गूँथा जाता है ।

हे जनसमूह की एकता के विधायक, हे भारत के भाग्य-विधाता, तुम्हारी जय हो,  
बार-बार जय हो, जय हो ।

पतन और उत्थानके ऊबड़खाबड़ मार्ग पर युग-युग से दौड़ रहा है यह यात्री ;  
चिरकाल से तुम इस रथ को चलानेवाले सारथि हो ; तुम्हारे रथचक्र से  
दिनरात यह पथ मुखरित है ।

दारुण विल्व के भीतर भी तुम्हारी शंखध्वनि बजती रहती है ।  
संकट और दुःख से रक्षा करनेवाले,

हे जनगण के मार्गदर्शक, हे भारत के भाग्य-विधाता, तुम्हारी जय हो,  
बार-बार जय हो, जय हो ।

निबिड़ अंधकार से आच्छन्न घोर रात्रि में जब देश पीड़ित और मूर्च्छित था,  
(तब भी) तुम्हारी अविचल मंगलमयी दृष्टि जमी हुई थी—

नतनयन हो, निर्निमेष भाव से ।

दुःस्वप्न के समय और आतंक की घड़ी में तुमने गोद में लेकर रक्षा की थी,

तुम स्नेहमयी माता हो ।

हे जनगण को दुःख से त्राण करनेवाले, भारत के भाग्य-विधाता, तुम्हारी जय हो,

बार-बार जय हो, जय हो ।

(अब) पौ फट गई है, प्राची में उदयगिरि के ललाट पर सूर्य का उदय हो गया है,

पंछी चहक रहे हैं, पवित्र वायु नवजीवन का रस ढाल रही है ;

तुम्हारी करुणा से अरुणायित राग से यह निद्रित भारत जाग रहा है,

तुम्हारे चरणों में उसका मस्तक नत है ।

जय हो, हे राजराजेश्वर, हे भारत के भाग्य-विधाता, तुम्हारी जय हो,

बार-बार जय हो, जय हो ।

## APPENDIX I

### MAHATMA GANDHI ON JANA-GANA-MANA

... They had just heard the national song he wrote, a song which has found a place in our national life. "How often is the inspiring refrain heard from thousands of voices! It is not only a song but is also like a devotional hymn."

In a prayer discourse on 8 May 1946,  
Rabindranath Tagore's birth anniversary  
From *Harijan*, 19 May 1946.

### PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU ON NATIONAL ANTHEM OF INDIA AND ITS TUNE

Pandit Nehru, who was replying to Mr. V. C. Kesava Rao, said:

"This question was addressed to my colleague, the Home Minister. But as I have been largely concerned with this matter, I am taking the liberty of answering it myself. I am grateful to the Hon'ble Member who has put this question as this enables the Government to remove certain misapprehensions on the subject.

"The question of having a National Anthem tune to be played by orchestras and bands became an urgent one for us immediately after August 15, 1947. It was as important from the point of view of our Defence Services and our foreign embassies and legations and other establishments. It was obviously not suitable for "God Save The King" to be played by our army bands, or abroad, after the changeover to independence. We were constantly being asked as to what tune should be played on such occasions. We could not give an

answer because the decision could only be made ultimately by the Constituent Assembly.

"The 'Jana-Gana-Mana' tune, slightly varied, had been adopted as National Anthem by the Indian National Army in South-East Asia and had subsequently attained a degree of popularity in India also.

"The matter came to a head on the occasion of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1947 in New York. Our delegation was asked for our National Anthem for the orchestra to play on a particular occasion. The delegation possessed a record of 'Jana-Gana-Mana' and they gave this to the orchestra who practised it. When they played it before a large gathering it was very greatly appreciated, and representatives of many nations asked for a musical score of this new tune which struck them as *distinctive and dignified*. This orchestral rendering of "Jana-Gana-Mana" was recorded and sent to India. The practice grew for our Defence Services bands to play this tune, and foreign embassies and legations also used it whenever occasion required. From various countries we received messages of appreciation and congratulation of this tune, which was considered by experts and others as *superior to most of the National Anthems* which they had heard. Many expert musicians in India and abroad, as well as many bands and orchestras practised it, and sometimes slightly varied it, with the result that the All-India Radio collected quite a number of renderings.

"Apart from the general appreciation with which this tune was received, there was at the time not much choice for us, as there was no proper musical rendering available to us of any other National Song which we could send abroad. At that stage, I wrote to all the Provincial Governors and asked their views about our adopting "Jana-Gana-Mana" or any other song as the National Anthem. I asked them to consult their Premiers before replying. I made it perfectly clear to them that the final decision rested with the Constituent Assembly, but owing to the

urgency of some directions being sent to foreign embassies and the Defence Services, a provisional decision had become essential. Every one of these Governors, except one (the Governor of the Central Provinces) signified their approval of "Jana-Gana-Mana". Thereupon, the Cabinet considered the matter and came to the decision that provisionally "Jana-Gana-Mana" should be used as the tune for the National Anthem till such time as the Constituent Assembly came to a final decision.

"Instructions were issued accordingly to the Provincial Governors. It was very clear that the wording of "Jana-Gana-Mana" was not wholly appropriate and some changes would be necessary. What was important was the tune to be played by bands and orchestras and not the wording.

"Subsequently the new Premier of West Bengal informed us that he and his Government preferred 'Vande Mataram.'

"That is the position at present. It is unfortunate that some kind of argument has arisen as between "Vande Mataram" and "Jana-Gana-Mana". "Vande Mataram" is obviously and indisputably the premier national song of India, with great historical tradition and intimately connected with our struggle for freedom. That position it is bound to retain and no other song can displace it. It represents the passion and poignancy of that struggle, but perhaps not so much the culmination of it.

"In regard to the National Anthem tune, it was felt that the tune was more important than the words, and that this tune should be such as to represent the Indian musical genius as well as to some extent the western, so that it might equally be adaptable to orchestral and band music, and for being played abroad. The real significance of the National Anthem is perhaps more abroad than in the Home country. Past experience has shown us that "Jana-Gana-Mana" tune has been greatly appreciated and admired abroad. It is very distinctive and there is a certain life and movement in it. It was thought by some people that the "Vande Mataram" tune with all its very

great attraction and historical background was not easily suitable for being played by orchestras in foreign countries, and there was not enough movement in it. It seemed, therefore, that while "Vande Mataram" should continue to be the national song *par excellence* in India, the National Anthem tune should be that of "Jana-Gana-Mana". The wording of "Jana-Gana-Mana" is to be suitably altered to fit in with the existing circumstances.

"This question has to be considered by the Constituent Assembly, and it is open to that Assembly to decide as it chooses. It may decide on a completely new song or tune if such is available."

A statement made in reply to a short notice question in the Constituent Assembly (Legislative), New Delhi, August 25, 1948.

## APPENDIX II

### JANA-GANA-MANA AND THE I.N.A.

For months past I have been watching with considerable interest and amusement the controversy over the question of the National Anthem of Free India. Some of the arguments put forth by a number of rather prominent public men of our land have really amazed me. There are some among them who have even considered it fit to attribute motives and suggested absurd interpretations to the well-known national song 'Janaganamana Adhinayaka'. They are, apparently, either ignorant of facts or, perhaps, it serves their ulterior purpose to denounce and discredit a song that inspired millions of Indians, outside as well as inside India, to suffer, sacrifice and even gladly lay down their lives for the cause of Indian freedom.

To attempt to compare 'Bande Mataram' with 'Janaganamana' is absurd and meaningless. 'Bande Mataram' as a slogan or as a national song has played its important part in the past and will certainly continue to be remembered as a song that had been a source of inspiration to the revolutionary youths of India, particularly Bengal, in those early days when patriotism was considered as a crime by our alien rulers and when our fight for freedom was confined to a selected few revolutionary youths. 'Bande Mataram' was more popular as a slogan than as a national song. Many have, undoubtedly, laid down their lives with 'Bande Mataram' on their lips. That does not mean, however, that there were less sacrifices made with 'Janaganamana' or its Hindusthani version 'Subh sukh chain' on people's lips. Those who have tried to suggest that there have been greater sacrifices in the name of 'Bande Mataram' have failed to realise the extent to which Indians in East Asia most willingly and gladly gave their all and how the *I.N.A. soldiers fought and died gallantly for India's freedom inspired by the song 'Janaganamana'*.

There are some who even suggest that we of the I.N.A. discarded 'Janaganamana' and adopted "Subh sukh chain" because the former was composed in praise of an alien ruler. So far as this allegation on the song is concerned, the Poet's own reply, given years ago, has abundantly proved its fallacy and I need not say anything about it. I may say, however, that I was personally and very closely connected with the adoption of Netaji's Azad Hind Government's National Anthem and wish to make it clear that Netaji or any one of us in Netaji's Cabinet never discarded 'Janaganamana'. I was entrusted with the work of getting a suitable Hindi version of the song composed and with the help of our young poet, Hussain, I had the privilege of getting the song 'Janaganamana' translated into its Hindi version, 'Subh sukh chain'.

It will be of interest to note that long before we got "Subh



sukh chain", the original song '*Janaganamana*', used to be sung as our National Anthem by the Indians in Germany under the leadership of Netaji and Netaji himself directed the Bandmaster of I.N.A. in practising the tune of "Jana Gana Mana". He himself sang "*Jana gana mana*" with enthusiasm when he used to be alone. To suggest that he was in any way apathetic towards this song is to tell a lie.

To suggest that "*Janaganamana*" or "*Subh sukh chain*" be adopted as our national anthem does not mean any discredit to "*Bandemataram*" at all. We had and have to discard many old slogans as obsolete because they are out of place in a free India. But "*Bandemataram*" as a slogan will remain and will continue to be respected. However, when we have to adopt a national anthem we have to think of so many other things besides sentiment or history. In a dependent India, for obvious reasons, like our national flag, we could not have a even nationally and universally recognised national anthem; much less one that could be officially recognised. However, now that we have achieved freedom our flag and our anthem shall have to be respected not only by every Indian but by all Governments worth the name. They have, therefore, to be selected very carefully. Our national flag of old days, that had inspired us to unlimited sacrifices, both inside as well as outside India, had to undergo changes after we achieved freedom. Similarly our national anthem will have to be selected with due consideration of so many factors. It must be such that may inspire respect and command attention even among the peoples of other countries. So far as language is concerned it does not play such an important part as the tune of an anthem when played in a foreign country or at an international gathering. Even in India, long before we achieved freedom Indian National Congress had to decide in favour of a new anthem, not so much perhaps, on the ground of language as due to some religious sentiments expressed in *Bandemataram*.

Even the wording of Bandemataram has undergone changes as circumstances changed. Originally Bankim Babu took pride only in the seven crores of our population, while now we sing for thirty crores although the population of India till very recently was nearly forty crores. Population may be ever changing and our national anthem will have to be on a permanent basis. It is being sung in varieties of tunes even in Bengal, not to speak of other provinces. Its tune is not very inspiring for those who do not understand the meaning and who are not devotedly Hindu-minded.

On the other hand "Janaganamana" or "Subh sukh chain" is very inspiring on band. During the days of war our I.N.A. anthem record had become so popular that even the Burmese, Chinese, Siamese and Japanese populations of East Asia played it invariably. When in Singapore Jail I initiated a practice that when we were served diet in the evening before being locked in cells, we the I.N.A. men would sing our national anthem before taking our meals. After a few days we found that prisoners of other nationalities in surrounding cells of our prison, even the European prisoners, began to sing it with us. Thus the whole prison rang with the tune of "Subh sukh chain" to the great annoyance and nervousness of prison authorities.

The Germans and the Japanese are extremely proud of their national anthem and would never admit that the anthem of any other country was superior to theirs. Yet, many highly educated Japanese admitted that our anthem beat theirs in inspiring people and on many occasions they said so publicly. Netaji told me that *Germans in Germany* told him frankly that although they considered their anthem the best in the world, they found our "anthem as inspiring as theirs if not more".

Thus the tune "Janaganamana" can be easily considered the best for our national anthem. It seems there is some prejudice against it because it was the anthem of the I.N.A. However, after the great enthusiasm with which all classes of people

supported and upheld the I.N.A. it is unbelievable that the general public would dislike it because it was the anthem of I.N.A. After all I.N.A. has given "Jai Hind" which has been so enthusiastically adopted even in official circles and both military and civil personnel use it without any prejudice. So far the language is concerned, "Subh sukh chain" is in our national language and its Hindustani is very simple that can be understood by almost all Indians knowing even a little Hindustani. *It is free from all religious or communal attachments.* I am therefore of opinion that if we free ourselves from all biases and prejudices and selfish interests we shall have no difficulty in realising the wisdom of adopting "Janaganamana" with its Hindi version "Subh sukh chain" as the National Anthem of Free India.—JAI HIND.

ANANDA MOHAN SAHAY,  
*Minister, Azad Hind Cabinet,*  
—*The Nation*, 10 March 1949.

### APPENDIX III

#### A STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE VISVA-BHARATI

Santiniketan, 30 November 1948.—Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis, Dr. D. M. Bose, Pandit Kshitimohan Sen Sastri, Sriyut Nandalal Bose, Pandit Hazariprasad Dwivedi, Dr. Nihar Ranjan Ray, and other members of the Governing Body of the Visva-Bharati have issued the following statement:

A bitter controversy is now raging around the question of choice of the National Anthem of India. We should state here clearly that we have no desire to participate in that

controversy and we shall, as a matter of course, unquestioningly accept whatever song is selected as the National Anthem by our representatives in the Constituent Assembly.

We however feel it our duty to contradict the baseless rumour, so often repudiated and now revived again, that the song "Jana-gana-mana" was composed in adoration of King George V and that it was sung at the Delhi Durbar, December 1911.

The poet, in a letter written in 1937 in reply to a correspondent who drew his attention to this rumour stated:

"In this song I have proclaimed the victory of that 'Eternal Charioteer' who drives man's destiny along the road rugged with rises and falls of nations. That great Dispenser of human destiny through the ages could never be George the Fifth, George the Sixth, or for that matter, any other George."

To another correspondent he wrote in 1939:

"I should only insult myself if I cared to answer those who consider me capable of such unbounded stupidity as to worship George the Fourth or George the Fifth as the Eternal Charioteer leading the pilgrims on their journey through the countless ages of the timeless history of mankind."

These extracts from the Poet's letters, published in many widely circulated journals of Bengal, require no comment or elaboration, and to many of his countrymen these should be enough evidence of the utter absurdity of the canard. Those who are interested in the matter, may also refer to the *Historical Record of the Imperial Visit to India, 1911*, published by John Murray, London in 1914 under the authority and order of the Viceroy of India and see for themselves that *the song was never sung at the Delhi Durbar, December 1911 or in any other ceremony connected with the royal visit.*

It should be well-known by now that the song was first used as the opening song at the 2nd day's session of the Indian National Congress held in Calcutta on 27 December 1911, and

that it was referred to as "a patriotic song composed by Babu Rabindranath Tagore" in the official Congress report.

Soon after the song was sung in public for the second time in Calcutta on 11 Magh (25 January 1912) on the occasion of the Maghotsava (Divine Service to mark the anniversary of the Brahmo Samaj). It is evident that a song composed in praise of the English king could not be sung by a congregation assembled to sing the praise of God, "the King of kings".

Those who will read the text of the song carefully will surely realise that this song, which invokes the blessings of God on the Nation, only represents the traditional spirit of India.

The very suggestion that this song is a tribute to King George is a slur on the memory of Rabindranath Tagore and is humiliating to India.—A. P. & U. P.

—*Hindusthan Standard*, 2 Dec. 1948.

### "NATIONAL IMPORT OF JANA-GANA-MANA"

Fourteen well-known citizens of Calcutta have issued the following endorsing the statement issued by the members of the Governing Body of the Visva-Bharati regarding the origin of Rabindranath Tagore's song "Jana-gana-mana":

We have read the statement issued by members of the Governing body of the Visva-Bharati regarding the origin of Rabindranath Tagore's song "Jana-gana-mana" which we endorse whole-heartedly. It is regrettable that such a rumour about this noble song, the national import of which is crystal clear, should have ever been spread. While some of us may like "Vande Mataram" to be chosen as the National Anthem in preference to "Jana-gana-mana", we should take this opportunity to request our countrymen not to give credence to this vilification of a song which remains one of the most cherished treasures of our national literature.

Urmila Devi  
Rajsekhar Bose  
Vidhusekhara Bhattacharya  
Satyaranjan Bakshi  
Satyendranath Mazumdar  
Vivekananda Mukhopadhyay  
Niranjan Singh Talib

Satyendranath Bose  
Benoy Sarkar  
Syed Nausher Ali  
Bhagirath Kanoria  
Buddhadeva Bose  
Premankur Atarhi  
Ajit Datta

—A. P.

—*Hindusthan Standard*, 4 Dec. 1948.

## “THE GREAT POEM IS THERE FOR EVERYONE TO READ”

\*The Governing Body of the Visva-Bharati, some of whose members are in the front rank of the intellectual and cultural life of our country, has issued a statement contradicting a rumour that Rabindranath had composed his song “Jana-gana-mana” in adoration of King George V on the occasion of the Delhi Durbar of 1911. One feels a sense of shame that this had to be done and has been done. . . .

It is not to be expected that all who join in political controversies in our country will be acquainted with Rabindranath’s life and mind and to know that it was not possible for him to write a song or a poem in adoration of King George V or any other English king and Emperor of India. But the great poem is there for everyone to read.

Those whose intelligence can imagine—I am speaking nothing of appreciation of poetry—that the ‘eternal charioteer, whose chariot-wheels resound ceaselessly over the rugged road through which age after age travellers rush in their journey of rise and fall’ is a British monarch, or that ‘He, whose bugle sounds amidst revolutions dire, banishing pain and fear,’ is a British

king, the band playing Rule Britannia—do not deserve to be contradicted. . . .

One can only hope that the Visva-Bharati will not try to explain Rabindranath to those Indians who do not care to know him and may not be mentally fit to understand him. They are Rabindranath's countrymen only geographically.

ATUL CHANDRA GUPTA.

—*Orient*, 26 Dec. 1948.

#### APPENDIX IV

#### 'MUSICALLY RIGHT FOR OUR REQUIREMENTS'

. . . Our choice would inevitably fall on one of the two songs already popular; Vande Mataram and Jana Gana Mana. The fact that they are both in Bengali should hardly matter, as after all a national anthem is only occasionally sung; it is usually played as a piece of music, and seldom the whole piece. This, in fact, is the root of the matter. Most people, certainly most of the members of the Constituent Assembly who should know better, have been talking about the national anthem as a piece of poetry. Even as poetry Tagore's work seems superior to Bankim's. Vande Mataram is nostalgic, harking back to our past glory, while Jana Gana Mana is more progressive and forward-looking. For a new India that we want to build up, Jana Gana Mana would be more appropriate. But what matters is: which of the two lends itself more easily to a musical rendering? Secondly, what sort of a musical rendering? Both these songs as Indian songs can be sung in melody by a chorus, but the national anthem of a modern State has to be played by a military band on ceremonial occasions when the Head of the State takes the salute. It may have to

be played by an orchestra when our Prime Minister visits a foreign country or our Ambassador in Washington or Moscow entertains guests. It is customary to play only a few bars of a national anthem—for a minute or even less.

The moment we talk of military bands and orchestras and a few bars, we are in fact talking in terms of Western music. A song, purely in melody, cannot be played by a brass band or orchestra. Whether we like it or not, we have to introduce harmony into our national anthem and write its score for a Western music orchestra or band. It cannot be played by an Indian orchestra. In the first place, the question of playing a song in melody by any orchestra does not arise. The Indian orchestra is a misnomer because, what it really means is that a number of musical instruments accompany a vocal song. Orchestration of a musical piece as a theme is a Western concept and therefore, we have to harmonize the Indian song to make it possible for a Western orchestra to play it. Secondly, one can't imagine a military band consisting of a number of *sarangis*, *sitars*, *sarods*, *veenas* and *tablas* marching in front of an army! In short, we want a national anthem for two purposes: first to be sung as an Indian song in melody, say at a public meeting, and, second, a harmonized version written in Western musical notation which can be played by a military band or an orchestra.

A national anthem is after all meant to be sung by ordinary men women who generally lack musical training or a musical ear. Tagore was a musician besides being a great poet and his songs have a natural rhythm which is missing from Vande Mataram. Jana Gana Mana has a standard Vishvā-Bharati tune presumably based on the tune to which Tagore originally set it. Because of its *Adhunik* quality it is easy to sing. Vande Mataram with its long-drawn notes is difficult to sing, particularly in chorus. It has been rendered by so many musicians



in so many different ways that it is difficult to standardize its tune. Vishnu Digambar set it to a highly classical tune which the ordinary man finds extremely difficult to render faithfully. Vishva-Bharati has set it to a typically Bengali tune. Eminent singers like Onkar Nath Thakur, Hira Bai Barodkar, Subbalakshmi and Master Krishna Rao Pandit have all tried their hand at it. Dilip Kumar Roy has rendered it in his own characteristic style—a style obviously unsuitable for a national anthem. Timir Baran in his attempt to modernize it has given a rendering which sounds like a fox-trot and no one will be able to identify it as Vande Mataram unless he was told so. Of the two Jana Gana Mana would not only lend itself much more easily to harmonization but also to being played for only a minute or so as almost a complete piece of music. Despite the sentimental reasons—which of course cannot be ignored in the choice of a national anthem—it seems that the Prime Minister's decision is a suitable one.

A CORRESPONDENT

in *The People*, Delhi, 8 May 1949.

## APPENDIX V

### SOME STATEMENTS, LETTERS TO EDITORS AND EDITORIAL COMMENTS

#### “THE CONJOINT VOICE OF INDIA”

Dr. J. H. Cousins writes:

My suggestion is that Dr. Rabindranath's own intensely patriotic, ideally stimulating and at the same time world-embracing 'Morning Song of India' ('Janaganamana . . .') should be confirmed officially as what it has for almost twenty

years been unofficially, namely, the true National Anthem of India. This real expression of aspiration for the highest welfare of a whole people . . . is universally known in the country. It has a tune and rhythm that make it singable with definiteness, unity and vigour . . .

Janagana specially recognises the diversity of human life in India, and gives it its true unification, not an impossible uniformity of externals, but the real unity that comes of mutual aspirations towards the Universal Life in which all share. . . In this all the faiths can join without reservation.

The adoption of this immortal utterance as the **conjoint Voice of India** would demonstrate a nation's intelligence in recognizing the world's greatest and noblest and purest figure in literature, and at the same time would put into circulation thoughts and feelings of the most uplifting and energising kind.

In times of crisis what more potent call to unity could there be than the second stanza of the great anthem:

“Day and night thy voice goes out from land to land,  
calling the Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains round thy  
throne and the Parsees, Mussalmans and Christians. The  
East and the West join hands in their prayer to thee, and  
the garland of love is woven. Thou bringest the hearts of  
all people into the harmony of one life, Thou dispenser of  
India's destiny.”

In the victory of nation or creed or class there is defeat for all: in the victory of the Universal Life, to which all may turn in terms of their own faith, there is victory for all, and in the expression of allegiance to that Universal Life there is expressed, not the shifty sentiment of expedient tolerance, but the eternal law of unity in diversity.

—*Madras Mail*, 3 November 1937.

## “NOT ‘A POEM OF PRAISE FOR AN ALIEN KING’ ”

Sir,—I have been pained to hear and see in recent months, more than once and at more than one place, references to Rabindranath's National Song—"Jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka jaya hey Bharata-bhagya-bidhata"—as having been "composed on the occasion of the visit of His Majesty King George V and sung in the Delhi Durbar." (I am quoting from a letter published a few days ago in a well-known weekly with an all-India circulation.)

Ordinarily I would take no notice of these canards. But I see a sinister move behind these more-than-audible whisperings. The Constituent Assembly have appointed a Committee to select our National Songs, and claims and counter-claims, I understand, are being put forward on behalf of songs from other parts of India. I shall leave it at that for the present though I know a little more.

I think I should place it on record here for all those who may not know it, or who may be otherwise inclined, that this great anthem was *first sung at the session of the Indian National Congress held in Calcutta in 1911*. It met during Christmas at Greer's Park—now the Ladies' Park—on Upper Circular Road with Pandit Bishan Narain Dar of Lucknow as President and Bhupendranath Basu of Calcutta as Chairman of the Reception Committee. *I was one of the choir of young men and women singing the song led by the late Dinendranath Tagore*. A month later it was sung at the anniversary festival of the Brahmo Samaj—Maghotsava—at the ancestral residence of the poet and published in the same month (January, 1912) in the "Tattvabodhini Patrika" the famous periodical founded by the poet's father, as a *Brahmo-Sangit* (Brahmo hymn). It was never sung and could not be sung at the Delhi Durbar for the very plain reason that it was not "a poem of praise for an alien king" (I am again quoting from the letter I have

referred to in the first paragraph). It was—as it should be plain even to the meanest intelligence—a song dedicated to the Dispenser of India's destiny driving through the ages His chariot on the high road of human history, strewn with the rise and fall of kingdoms and empires, reverberating to the ceaseless sound of its wheels: *patana-abhyudaya-bandhura-pantha-yuga-yuga-dhabita-jatri, hey chira-sarathi taba ratha-chakre mukharita patha-dinaratri!* Could that “Eternal Charioteer” be King George V or any earthy king for the matter of that?

Imagine the person who wrote in his fifteenth year a most scathing poem on the Delhi Durbar of 1877 composing a song for it in 1911! Imagine the person who threw away his knighthood welcoming the King with a pæan of praise! —AMAL HOME, Central Municipal Office, Calcutta.

[ Elsewhere we publish a letter from our friend Syt. Amal Home of the “Calcutta Municipal Gazette”, to which we should like to draw the attention of our readers. He has lost no time in contradicting the most mischievous canard that seems to be going round—that the universally acclaimed National Song of Rabindranath Tagore, “Jana-gana-mana-adhinayaka jaya hey Bharata-bhagya-bidhata,” was a song composed on the occasion of the Delhi Durbar of King George V. That such a preposterous statement can be seriously made passes our comprehension. It is almost unbelievable in its absurdity. Apart from the spirit and language of the anthem which gives the lie direct to the baseless allegation. Syt. Home has quoted chapter and verse to prove its utter falsity. He has established beyond cavil and contradiction that the song was first sung in the Indian National Congress, and he has done it with all the authority that we have come to associate with him when it is anything about Tagore. We are sure that the Song Committee of the Constituent Assembly will not pay any heed to the mischievous lie Syt. Home so

indignantly repudiates. He has nailed it to the counter, and we shall leave it at that.—*Editor.*]

—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 12 December 1947.

### “A PAGEANT OF TIME”

... On the controversy itself the poet's word ought to be the last word. On the internal evidence of poetry '*Jana Gana*' stands altogether apart from the class of marriage poems or the usual Poet Laureate adulations. It is not the human solitary crying his soul out, but it exhibits that paradox of art, the poet withdrawing from his fellows into the world of art, only to enter more closely into communion with humanity. The desire to seek out an "occasion" for the poem is to suppose that an integrated world-view that forces the reader's attention on spheres outside his back garden, beyond the range of a local need, implies a basic lack of interest in poetry. On the poet's showing cosmic history is dissolved into moments of song, but then it displays poetry not of moments, but of men and movement, a pageant of Time which is creation and the creator. There is facility of expression, a spell of eloquence, almost continual inspiration, but then if one tries to unlock the wells of poetic creation, it must be understood to relate to the world of social emotion. The whole inspiration is summed up in an intense cumulative moment and afterwards set forth in its broad manifold bearings—a phenomenon akin to what Mozart meant by saying that he heard his musical pieces not in a succession of notes but all at once as one whole and later arranged them out. The inspiration is all-but-uttered, and in *Jana Gana* not much is left "out of reach." The question whether *Jana Gana* should be our National Anthem is a different matter altogether, and is not posited by answering the present controversy in the affirmative or in the negative.

—*The Nation*, 3 December 1948.

## “A VISION OF UNITY”

... There were times when foreign dominations strove to overthrow our inheritance and our freedom with an iron hand, he rose like a giant and his lyric voice took on the dimensions of a trumpet whose blast was epic. . . . Some of Tagore's revolutionary songs have passed into history which they made. Indeed, even today after the winning of our National Independence, side by side with the three-coloured flag which floats everywhere, his famous song “Jana-gana-mana” flows through the throats of millions giving them not only courage but a constant rounded *vision of unity*, of India despite her unnatural and temporary division into two states as inherently and eternally one and indestructible.

—HON'BLE SRI B. GOPALA REDDI

In the course of an address at the  
Andhra University, 11 December 1948.  
From *The Nation*, 15 December 1948.

## “UNITY OF MAN AND UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD”

Sir,—True, “Bande Mataram” has taken us to journey's end by traversing more than half a century's struggle for political freedom. True, again, our patriots and martyrs who have gone before us had “Bande Mataram” on their lips as they smilingly faced jail and gallows. But still “Jana gana mana” has got its points. Besides what Pandit Nehru told us about its colourful tune and superior bandworthiness, “Jana gana mana” seems acceptable on some broader principles too. Won't it be *an admirable national anthem with the background of our two sins—communalism and provincialism?* “Jana Gana Mana” admittedly gives us a better sense of the unity

of man and universal brotherhood. It will perhaps make a heartier chorus from the mouths of all citizens—Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jains and Parsees. Let us not be only looking back ; let us change with the times. New India is a secular state. Let our slogans and national anthem be as much shorn of religion and the religious as possible. We have seen how religio-politics breeds fanaticism and tends to separate us.

—BIJOY CH. SEN, Calcutta.

—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 8 November 1948.

### “LOFTY IDEALS OF PATRIOTISM AND UNIVERSALISM”

Sir,—An argument against this song is that its language is not understood by all. This song, if written in Devnagri script, will be easily understood by anyone who knows that script.

Some say that it cannot be accepted as an all India song as all the provinces of India are not mentioned in it. This song is far from being an inventory of the Indian provinces. The provinces chosen have been mainly for rhyme and rhythm, and also, by mentioning the boundary provinces and the hills and rivers of India, to draw up a *picture of India as a geographical entity*.

The song, with its inspiring words, the lofty ideals of patriotism and universalism that it preaches, the wonderful tune and cadence it gives us and, above all, with its perfectly non-communal and non-sectarian character, is best suited for India's National Anthem.—JITEN SEN.

—*Behar Herald*, 25 December 1948.

## APPENDIX VI

# FREE PRESS BULLETIN SURVEY OF PUBLIC OPINION

### BOMBAYMAN VOTES FOR GURUDEV TAGORE'S SONG

We present here the findings of the Bulletin survey of public opinion on the choice of the National Anthem of India. In addition to the interest that readers will naturally take in the results of the survey, we trust that the sub-committee of the Constituent Assembly of India on the National Anthem, which is even now deliberating on its choice, will benefit from the analysis of the views of Bombay's citizens.

We shall now give you the findings of our survey:

QUESTION 1. "Have you heard the three songs?" The survey suffered to a small extent by the fact that the opinion of some responders could not be taken into account and accepted as final since they had not heard all the three songs. Naturally, no comparative study is possible without a working familiarity with all. However, this number was small—only 4 per cent of the total; they have, therefore, not been considered in our calculations.

### SONG CONTENTS

QUESTION 2. This question which specifically broke down the qualities of the three songs and categorised them into five groups, elicited more information about Bombayman's exact views than the question on the actual choice of the anthem. The "most" inspiring of the three songs was voted to be "Vande Mataram" which got 37.1 per cent; 34.4 per cent found "Jana Gana Mana" most inspiring, while 28.5 per cent preferred "Hindustan Hamara".



However, in answer to "Which is the most appealing in tune?", by far the largest number selected "Jana Gana Mana". 51.0 per cent found this most appealing. "Vande Mataram"—27.2 per cent; and "Hindustan Hamara"—21.8 per cent.

It is significant that among those who voted for "Jana Gana Mana" for its tune appeal were trained musicians whose opinion can certainly be taken to be of effect.

Which of the three is the most poetic in sentiment?—"Jana Gana Mana" polled 34.6 per cent; "Vande Mataram" 33.8 per cent; and "Hindustan Hamara" 21.6 per cent. This question sought to strip the songs of ideas of association, emotion, prejudice and national sentiment; and quite unsurprisingly we find Gurudev's song being preferred. Iqbal's song was not backed here as much as it probably deserves, as its poetic content is unquestionably high; but the highly chaste Urdu and its relatively lesser field of influence might have accounted for this.

### HISTORICAL VALUE

So far as historical association went "Vande Mataram" topped the list again; 48.9 per cent preferred this, while 35.0 per cent cast votes for "Jana Gana Mana" and 16.1 per cent for "Hindustan Hamara".

Finally, the figures for "national characteristics" were: 41.4 per cent for "Jana Gana Mana", 35.8 per cent for "Vande Mataram" and 22.8 per cent for "Hindustan Hamara"

### HOW THEY VOTED

Jana Gana Mana	...	...	37.4 p.c.
Vande Mataram	...	...	27.1 p.c.
Hindustan Hamara	...	...	18.6 p.c.
Something new	...	...	16.9 p.c.

## THE APPEAL

Most Inspiring—Vande Mataram	...	...	(37·1%)
Tune appeal—Jana Gana Mana	...	...	(51·0%)
Poetic content—Jana Gana Mana	...	...	(44·6%)
Most historical—Vande Mataram	...	...	(48·9%)
Most national—Jana Gana Mana	...	...	(41·4%)

## PERCENTAGES

Song		Most inspiring	Tune appeal	Poetic	Historical	National
Jana Gana Mana	...	34·4	51·0	44·6	35·0	41·4
Vande Mataram	...	37·1	27·2	33·8	49·9	35·8
Hindustan Hamara	...	28·5	21·8	21·6	16·1	22·8

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